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Second College Edition

The American Heritage Dictionary

INTRODUCTI

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SPECIAL ART

Language, Cu
Lee PedersonUsage and Ac
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mmuter special. 2. A featured attraction: *a special on lamb chops.* 3. A position that features a specific word or performer. [ME < OFr. *especial*, kind. —see SPECIES.] —*spec'cial*

and **spec'ially** have wider applicability. In the senses that it shares with **special** is now much more common, as is **especially**, **outstanding quality: a work of art especially.** On the other hand, **placed by speciality.** **Speciality** is its particular purpose: **especially trained, usually in the sense of "particularly": He's especially talented.** *Prudence is the best policy.* **espouse**

active act that applies only to a particular

1. *n., pl. special courts-martial* of at least three officers for trying delivery of a piece of mail, for a special messenger rather than

usual or sound effects added to a television show during processing division of the U.S. Army combat in guerrilla fighting.

the handling of fourth-class or *pass mail for an extra charge.* *iz'äm* *n.* 1. Confinement or limit of study or occupation. 2. A field

1. *n.* 1. a. A person who has devoted branch of study or research. b. Practice in a specified field. 2. Any in the U.S. Army that corresponds to sergeant first class. —*spec'iates*

l'i-të *n., pl. -ties.* 1. A distinguishing *specialities.* Special points of consideration. *Spec'ial* of consider-

h'ä-li-zä'shän *n.* The act of specifying specialized.

1.) *v.* -ized, -iz-ing, -iz-es. —*intr.* 1. In a special study or activity. 2. *to come adapted to a specific environment* or concentrate on a particular active *specializes in mountain-climbing* *specific mention of* or particularize. 2. *to function to.* 3. *Biol.* To add to specify the payee in endorsing

chosen by the court upon request by better-qualified candidates for complex issues of fact.

Law. The assertion of new or specious party's allegations, as an alternative.

2. A presentation of an argument favorable or a single aspect of the

physical theory of space and time that is based on the postulates *are equally valid in all nonaccelerating* and that light is propagated *at a constant speed* and that *relativistic mass increase of rapidly* *length contraction, time dilation, energy equivalence.* *extraordinary session of a court or of*

infinity *n.* Special relativity.

n., pl. -ties. 1. A special pursuit, skill. 2. An aspect of medicine or their practice. 3. A special feature, quality. 4. The state or quality of being in contract or agreement, esp. a debt

shän, -së- *n.* The evolutionary species are formed. [SPECIES]

Coined money; coin. —*Idiom* in *aw.* In kind; in the same kind or kind *ablatives of species.* — see

n., pl. species. 1. *Biol.* a. A fundamental classification, ranking after organisms capable of interbreeding to such a category, represented by a Latin adjective or epithet followed by. 2. *Logic.* A class of individuals of their common attributes and; a division subordinate to a particular type. 4. *Obs.* An outward form or

appearance. 5. *Rom. Cath. Ch.* a. The outward appearance or form of the Eucharistic elements that is retained after their consecration. b. Either of the consecrated elements of the Eucharist. 6. *Obs.* Specie. [Lat. *species*, appearance, kind < *specere*, to look at.]

spec-i-fi-able (*spék'si-fi'ə-bal*) *adj.* Capable of being specified.

spec-if-i-c (*spék'si-fik*) *adj.* 1. Explicitly set forth; definite.

2. Pertaining to, characterizing, or distinguishing a species.

3. Special, distinctive, or unique, as a quality or attribute.

4. Intended for, applying to, or acting upon a particular thing.

5. Denoting a disease produced by a particular microorganism or condition. 6. a. Denoting a customs charge levied upon merchandise by unit or weight rather than according to value. b. Denoting a commodity rate applicable to the transportation of a single commodity between named points. —*n.* 1. Something specific, as a quality, statement, or attribute. 2. A remedy intended for a particular ailment or disorder. [Med. Lat. *specificus* < Lat. *species*, kind, species.] —*spec'i-fi-cally* *adv.* —*spec'i-fi-city* (*spék'si-fis'i-té*) *n.*

spec-i-fi-ca-tion (*spék'si-fi-kä'shän*) *n.* 1. An act of specifying. 2. a. *specifications.* A detailed and exact statement of particulars, esp. a statement prescribing materials, dimensions, and workmanship for something to be built, installed, or manufactured. b. A single item or article that has been specified. 3. An exact written description of an invention by an applicant for a patent.

specific gravity *n.* The ratio of the mass of a solid or liquid to the mass of an equal volume of distilled water at 4°C or of a gas to an equal volume of air or hydrogen under prescribed conditions of temperature and pressure.

specific heat *n.* 1. The ratio of the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a unit mass of a substance by one unit of temperature to the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a similar mass of a reference material, usually water, by the same amount. 2. The amount of heat, measured in calories, required to raise the temperature of one gram of a substance by one centigrade degree.

specific impulse *n.* A performance measure for rocket propellants that is equal to units of thrust per unit weight of propellant consumed per unit time.

specific performance *n. Law.* The performance of a legal contract as specified in its terms.

specific resistance *n. Elect.* Resistivity (sense 2).

specific thrust *n. Elect.* Specific impulse.

spec-i-fy (*spék'si-fi*) *v.* -fied, -fy-ing, -fies. 1. To state explicitly. 2. To include in a specification. [ME *specify* < OFr. *specifier* < Med. Lat. *specificare* < *specificus*, specific.]

spec-i-men (*spék'si-män*) *n.* 1. An individual, item, or part taken as representative of an entire set or whole; sample.

2. A sample, as of tissue, blood, or urine, used for analysis and diagnosis. [Lat. *example* < *specere*, to look at.]

specious (*spék'shüs*) *adj.* 1. Deceptively attractive. 2. Having the ring of truth or plausibility but actually fallacious: a *specious argument.* [ME, attractive < Lat. *speciosus* < *species*, appearance < *specere*, to look at.] —*speciously* *adv.* —*speciousness* *n.*

spec'k (*spék*) *n.* 1. A small spot, mark, or discoloration. 2. A very small bit; particle. —*tr. v.* *specked*, *speck-ing*, *specks.* To mark with specks. [ME *specke* < OE *specca*.]

speck-le (*spék'äl*) *n.* A speck or small spot, esp. a natural dot of color on skin, plumage, or foliage. —*tr. v.* -led, -ling, -les. To mark or cover with or as if with speckles. [ME *spakle*, perh. of MLG orig.]

speck-led (*spék'äl-käd*) *adj.* 1. Dotted or covered with speckles, esp. flecked with small spots of contrasting color. 2. Of a mixed character; motley.

speckled trout *n.* The brook trout.

specs (*spéks*) *pl.n. Informal.* 1. Also *specs.* Eyeglasses; spectacles. 2. Specifications (sense 2.a).

spec-ta-cle (*spék'tä-käl*) *n.* 1. A public performance or display. 2. a. An object of interest. b. A regrettable public display, as of bad behavior: *made a spectacle of himself.*

3. a. Something seen or capable of being seen. b. The sight of something. 4. *spectacles.* a. Glasses (sense 4.b.). b. Something resembling eyeglasses in shape or suggesting them in function. [ME < OFr. < Lat. *spectaculum* < *specere*, to watch, freq. of *specere*, to look at.]

spec-ta-cled (*spék'tä-käl'd*) *adj.* 1. Wearing spectacles. 2. Having markings suggesting spectacles. Used of animals.

spec-ta-cular (*spék'tä-kü-lär*) *adj.* Of the nature of a spectacle; sensational. —*n.* A single theatrical production of unusual length or lavishness. —*spec-ta-cular-i-ty* (-lä'fär-té) *n.* —*spec-ta-cular-i-ty* *adv.*

spec-ta-tor (*spék'tä-tör*) *n.* An observer of an event. [Lat. *spectator* < *specere*, to watch. —see *SPECTACLE*.]

spec-ter (*spék'tär*) *n.* 1. A phantom; apparition. 2. A threatening or haunting possibility: *the terrible specter of nuclear war.* [Fr. *specre* < Lat. *spectrum*, appearance < *specere*, to look at.]

spec-tra (*spék'trä*) *n.* A plural of *spectrum.*

spec-tral (*spék'tral*) *adj.* 1. Of or resembling a specter; ghostly. 2. Of, pertaining to, or produced by a spectrum. —*spec-tral-i-ty* (-trä'l-i-të), *spec-tral-ness* *n.* —*spec-tral-ty* *adv.*

spec-tral line *n.* An isolated peak of intensity in a spectrum.

esp. one of the visible dispersed images of the slit through which light enters the collimator of a spectroscope, produced by light of a single wavelength.

spec-tre (*spék'tr*) *n. Chiefly Brit.* Variant of *specter.*

spec-tro- *pref.* Spectrum: *spectrograph.* [*SPECTRUM*.]

spec-tro-gram (*spék'trä-gram*) *n.* A graph or photograph of a spectrum.

spec-tro-graph (*spék'trä-gräf*) *n.* 1. A spectroscope equipped to photograph spectra. 2. A spectrogram.

—*spec-tro-graphic* *adj.* —*spec-tro-graph-i-cally* *adv.*

—*spec-tro-graphy* (*trög'rä-fë*) *n.*

spec-tro-he-li-o-gram (*spék'trä-hë'lë-ə-gräm*) *n.* A photograph of the sun taken in a narrow wavelength band centered on a selected wavelength.

spec-tro-he-li-o-graph (*spék'trä-hë'lë-ə-gräf*) *n.* An instrument used to make spectroheliograms. —*spec-tro-he-li-o-graphic* *adj.* —*spec-tro-he-li-o-graphy* (-ögräf'ë) *n.*

spec-tro-he-li-o-scope (*spék'trä-hë'lë-ə-sköp*) *n.* An instrument used to observe solar radiation. —*spec-tro-he-li-o-scopic* (-sköp'ik) *adj.*

spec-trom-e-ter (*spék'trä-më-tär*) *n.* A spectroscope equipped with scales for measuring the positions of spectral lines. [SPECTROSCOPE] + *-METER.* —*spec-tro-met-ric* (-mët'rik) *adj.* —*spec-trom-e-tric* *n.*

spec-tro-pho-to-met-ter (*spék'trä-fö-töm'ë-tär*) *n. Physics.*

An instrument used to determine the distribution of energy in a spectrum of luminous radiation. —*spec-tro-pho-to-metric* (-fö-täm'ët'rik) *adj.* —*spec-tro-pho-to-met-ric* *n.*

spec-tro-scope (*spék'trä-sköp*) *n.* Any of various instruments for resolving and observing or recording spectra. —*spec-tro-scop-ic* (-sköp'ik). *spec-tro-scop-i-cal* *adj.* —*spec-tro-scop-i-cally* *adv.*

spec-tro-sco-pic analysis *n.* The analysis of a spectrum to determine characteristics of its source, as the analysis of the optical spectrum of an incandescent body to determine its composition or motion.

spec-tros-co-py (*spék'trä-skö-pë*) *n.* The study of spectra, esp. the experimental observation of optical spectra. —*spec-tros-co-pist* *n.*

spec-trum (*spék'träm*) *n., pl. -tra (-trä) or -trums.* 1. *Physics.*

The distribution of a characteristic of a physical system or phenomenon, esp. a. The distribution of energy emitted by a radiant source, as by an incandescent body, arranged in order of wavelengths. b. The distribution of atomic or subatomic particles in a system, as in a magnetically resolved molecular beam, arranged in order of masses. c. A graphic or photographic representation of such a distribution.

2. a. A range of values of a quantity or set of related quantities. b. A broad sequence or range of related qualities, ideas, or activities: *the whole spectrum of 20th-century thought.* [Lat. *specula*, *specere* < *specere*, to look at.]

spec-u-la-ri-a (*spék'yä-lä-ri-ä*) *n.* A plural of *speculum.*

spec-u-lar (*spék'yä-lär*) *adj.* Of, resembling, or produced by a mirror or speculum.

spec-u-late (*spék'yä-lät*) *intr. v.* -lat-ed, -lat-ing, -lates. 1. To meditate on a given subject; reflect. 2. To engage in the buying or selling of a commodity with an element of risk on the chance of profit. [Lat. *speculari*, *speculat-*, to observe < *specula*, watchtower < *specere*, to look at.]

spec-u-la-tion (*spék'yä-lä-shän*) *n.* a. The act of speculating. b. Contemplation of profound nature. c. A conclusion, opinion, or theory reached by speculating. 2. a. Engagement in risky business transactions on the chance of quick or considerable profit. b. An instance of speculating.

spec-u-la-tive (*spék'yä-lä-tiv*, -lä'-tiv) *adj.* 1. Of, characterized by, or based upon contemplative speculation. 2. a. Given to speculation or conjecture. b. Spent in speculation. 3. a. Engaging in, given to, or involving financial speculation. b. Characteristic of speculation in the involvement of chance: risky. —*spec-u-la-tively* *adv.* —*spec-u-la-tive-ness* *n.*

spec-u-la-tor (*spék'yä-lä-tör*) *n.* One that speculates.

spec-u-lum (*spék'yä-lüm*) *n., pl. -la (-la) or -lums.* 1. A mirror or polished metal plate used as a reflector in optical instruments. 2. An instrument for dilating the opening of a body cavity for medical examination. 3. *Biol.* a. A bright, often iridescent patch of color on the wings of certain birds, esp. ducks. b. A transparent spot in the wings of some butterflies or moths. [Lat. *mirror* < *specere*, to look at.]

spec-u-lus (*spék'yä-lüs*) *n.* A past tense and past participle of *speed.*

speech (*spéch*) *n.* 1. a. The faculty or act of speaking.

b. The faculty or act of expressing or describing thoughts, feelings, or perceptions by the articulation of words.

2. Something that is spoken; utterance. 3. Vocal communication; conversation. 4. a. A talk or public address. b. A printed copy of an address. 5. A person's habitual manner or style of speaking. 6. The language or dialect of a nation or region. 7. The sounding of a musical instrument. 8. The study of oral communication, speech sounds, and vocal physiology. 9. *Archaic.* Rumor. [ME *speche* < OE *spéc*, *sprec*.]

speech community *n.* All speakers of a particular language or dialect, whether located in one area or scattered.

speech-i-fy (*spék'chü-fë*) *intr. v.* -fied, -fy-ing, -fies. To give a speech. —*speech-i-fier* *n.*

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nmuter special. 2. A featured item; a price: *a special on lamb chops*. 3. A section that features a specific word or performer. [ME < OFr. *especial*, kind. —see SPECIES.] —*specialist*

nd specially have wider applicability. In the sense that it shares with *special* is now much more common, as is *specially*, than *outstanding quality: a work of art especially*, on the other hand, is replaced by *especially*. *Especially* is not usually purpose: *especially trained*, *specially* is used in the sense of "particularly": *He's especially talented*. *Prudence is the best policy*, *especially*.

ive act that applies only to a particular

n. pl. special courts-martial 3 of at least three officers for trials

the delivery of a piece of mail, for a special messenger rather than a

sual or sound effects added to a television show during processing division of the U.S. Army composed in guerrilla fighting.

the handling of fourth-class or paiss mail for an extra charge. *z'am* n. 1. Confinement or limit of study or occupation. 2. A field

1. a. A person who has devoted branch of study or research. b. practice in a specified field. 2. Any the U.S. Army that correspond to sergeant first class. —*specialist*

1-*te* n. pl. -ties. 1. A distinguishing qualities. Special points of consideration. *Bri*. A specialty.

z-í-za'-shon n. The act of specializing.

-ized, -iz-ing, -iz-es. —*intr.* 1. In a special study or activity. 2. *become adapted to a specific environment* or *concentrate on a particular activity*; *specialize in mountain-climbing*, *mention of*; *particularize*. 2. *er or function to*. 3. *Biol.* To adapt

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chosen by the court upon request better-qualified candidates for complex issues of fact.

aw. The assertion of new or supporting party's allegations, as an after 2. A presentation of an argument favorable or a single aspect of the

physical theory of space and time that is based on the postulates are equally valid in all nonaccidental and that light is propagated at a constant speed and that the relativistic mass increase of rapidly moving objects is proportional to energy equivalence.

extraordinary session of a court of

ity n. Special relativity.

pl. -ties. 1. A special pursuit, skill. 2. An aspect of medicine or their practice. 3. A special feature. 4. The state or quality of being contract or agreement, esp. a deed

hon. -sé) n. The evolution of species are formed. [SPECIES]

Coined money; coin. —*Idiom*. in

in kind; in the same kind of kind < ablative of species. —*see*

pl. species. 1. *Biol.* a. A fundamental classification, ranking after organisms capable of interbreeding to such a category, represented by a Latin adjective or epithet followed by *Logic*. A class of individuals of their common attributes and a division subordinate to a particular type. 4. *Obs.* An outward form or

appearance. 5. *Rom. Cath. Ch.* a. The outward appearance or form of the Eucharistic elements that is retained after their consecration. b. Either of the consecrated elements of the Eucharist. 6. *Obs. Specie*. [Lat. *species*, appearance, kind of *specere*, to look at.]

spec-i-fi-able (*spé-sí-fí-á-bíl*) *adj.* Capable of being specified.

spec-i-fic (*spí-sí-fík*) *adj.* 1. Explicitly set forth; definite. 2. Pertaining to, characterizing, or distinguishing a species. 3. Special, distinctive, or unique, as a quality or attribute. 4. Intended for, applying to, or acting upon a particular thing. 5. Denoting a disease produced by a particular microorganism or condition. 6. a. Denoting a customs charge levied upon merchandise by unit or weight rather than according to value. b. Denoting a commodity rate applicable to the transportation of a single commodity between named points. —*n.* 1. Something specific, as a quality, statement, or attribute. 2. A remedy intended for a particular ailment or disorder. [Med. Lat. *specificus* < Lat. *species*, kind, species.] —*spec-i-fi-cal-ity* *adv.* —*spec-i-fi-city* (*spé-sí-fí-sí-té*) *n.*

spec-i-fi-ca-tion (*spé-sí-fí-ká-shón*) *n.* 1. An act of specifying. 2. a. *specifications*. A detailed and exact statement of particulars, esp. a statement prescribing materials, dimensions, and workmanship for something to be built, installed, or manufactured. b. A single item or article that has been specified. 3. An exact written description of an invention by an applicant for a patent.

spec-i-fic-grav-i-ty (*spé-sí-fík-gráv-i-té*) *n.* The ratio of the mass of a solid or liquid to the mass of an equal volume of distilled water at 4°C or of a gas to an equal volume of air or hydrogen under prescribed conditions of temperature and pressure.

spec-i-fic heat *n.* 1. The ratio of the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a unit mass of a substance by one unit of temperature to the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a similar mass of a reference material, usually water, by the same amount. 2. The amount of heat, measured in calories, required to raise the temperature of one gram of a substance by one centigrade degree.

spec-i-fic impulse *n.* A performance measure for rocket propellants that is equal to units of thrust per unit weight of propellant consumed per unit time.

spec-i-fic performance *n. Law.* The performance of a legal contract as specified in its terms.

spec-i-fic resistance *n. Elect.* Resistivity (sense 2).

spec-i-fic thrust *n.* Specific impulse.

spec-i-fy (*spé-sí-fí*) *tr.v.* -*fi-ed*, -*fy-ing*, -*fi-es*. 1. To state explicitly. 2. To include in a specification. [ME *specien* < OFr. *specifier* < Med. Lat. *specificare* < *specificus*, specific.]

spec-i-men (*spé-sí-mén*) *n.* 1. An individual, item, or part taken as representative of an entire set or whole; sample. 2. A sample, as of tissue, blood, or urine, used for analysis and diagnosis. [Lat. *example* < *specere*, to look at.]

spec-i-fous (*spé-fúsh*) *adj.* 1. Deceptively attractive. 2. Having the ring of truth or plausibility but actually fallacious: a *specious argument*. [ME, attractive < Lat. *speciosus* < *species*, appearance < *specere*, to look at.] —*specious-ly* *adv.* —*specious-ness* *n.*

spec-k (*spék*) *n.* 1. A small spot, mark, or discolored. 2. A very small bit; particle. —*tr.v.* *speck-ed*, *speck-ing*, *specks*. To mark with specks. [ME *specke* < OE *specca*.]

spec-k-le (*spék'-é*) *n.* A speck or small spot, esp. a natural dot of color on skin, plumage, or foliage. —*tr.v.* -*led*, -*ling*, -*les*. To mark or cover with or as if with speckles. [ME *spakle*, perh. of MLG orig.]

spec-k-le-d (*spék'-éld*) *adj.* 1. Dotted or covered with speckles, esp. flecked with small spots of contrasting color. 2. Of a mixed character; motley.

spec-kled trout *n.* The brook trout.

spec (*spéks*) *pl.n. Informal.* 1. Also *specks*. Eyeglasses; spectacles. 2. Specifications (sense 2.a.).

spec-ta-cle (*spék'-ták'-ál*) *n.* 1. A public performance or display. 2. a. An object of interest. b. A regrettable public display, as of bad behavior: *made a spectacle of himself*. 3. a. Something seen or capable of being seen. b. The sight of something. 4. *spectacles*. a. Glasses (sense 4.b.). b. Something resembling eyeglasses in shape or suggesting them in function. [ME < OFr. < Lat. *spectaculum* < *specere*, to watch, freq. of *specere*, to look at.]

spec-ta-cled (*spék'-ták'-éld*) *adj.* 1. Wearing spectacles. 2. Having markings suggesting spectacles. Used of animals.

spec-ta-cu-lar (*spék'-ták'-yú-lär*) *adj.* Of the nature of a spectacle; sensational. —*n.* A single theatrical production of unusual length or lavishness. —*spec-ta-cu-lar-i-ty* (-lär'-é-té) *n.* —*spec-ta-cu-lar-ly* *adv.*

spec-ta-tor (*spék'-tá-tör*) *n.* An observer of an event. [Lat. *spectator* < *specere*, to watch. —*see* SPECTACLE.]

spec-té (*spék'-té*) *n.* 1. A phantom; apparition. 2. A threatening or haunting possibility: *the terrible specter of nuclear war*. [Fr. *spectre* < Lat. *spectrum*, appearance < *specere*, to look at.]

spec-tra (*spék'-trə*) *n.* A plural of *spectrum*. —*spec-tra* (*spék'-trəl*) *adj.* Of or resembling a specter; ghostly. 2. Of, pertaining to, or produced by a spectrum. —*spec-tra-lí-ty* (-trá-lí-té), *spec-tra-ne-s* *n.* —*spec-tra-ly* *adv.*

spec-tral line *n.* An isolated peak of intensity in a spectrum,

esp. one of the visible dispersed images of the slit through which light enters the collimator of a spectroscope, produced by light of a single wavelength.

spec-tre (*spék'-tr*) *n.* *Chiefly Brit.* Variant of *specter*.

spec-tro- *pref.* *Spectrum*; *spectrograph*. [*< SPECTRUM*.]

spec-tro-gram (*spék'-trá-gram*) *n.* A graph or photograph of a spectrum.

spec-tro-graph (*spék'-trá-gráf*) *n.* 1. A spectroscope equipped to photograph spectra. 2. A spectrogram. —*spec-tro-graph'ic* *adj.* —*spec-tro-graph'i-cal-ly* *adv.* —*spec-tro-graph'ra-ph* (-trógrá-fé) *n.*

spec-tro-he-li-o-gram (*spék'-tró-hé'lé-ó-gram*) *n.* A photograph of the sun taken in a narrow wavelength band centered on a selected wavelength.

spec-tro-he-li-o-graph (*spék'-tró-hé'lé-ó-gráf*) *n.* An instrument used to make spectroheliograms. —*spec-tro-he-li-o-graph'ic* *adj.* —*spec-tro-he-li-o-og'r'a-phy* (-og'r'a-fé) *n.*

spec-tro-he-li-o-scope (*spék'-tró-hé'lé-ó-skóp*) *n.* An instrument used to observe solar radiation. —*spec-tro-he-li-o-scop'ic* (-skóp'ik) *adj.*

spec-tro-mé-ter (*spék'-tró-mé-tér*) *n.* A spectroscope equipped with scales for measuring the positions of spectral lines. [SPECTROSCOPE] + *-METER*. —*spec-tro-mé-tric* (-tró-mé-trík) *adj.* —*spec-tromé-tric*

spec-tro-pho-to-mé-ter (*spék'-tró-fó-tó-mé-tér*) *n. Physics.* An instrument used to determine the distribution of energy in a spectrum of luminous radiation. —*spec-tro-pho-to-mé-tric* (-fó-tó-mé-trík) *adj.* —*spec-tro-pho-to-mé-tr'y* *n.*

spec-tro-scope (*spék'-trá-skóp*) *n.* Any of various instruments for resolving and observing or recording spectra. —*spec-tro-scop'ic* (-skóp'ik). *spec-tro-scop'i-cal* *adj.* —*spec-tro-scop'i-cal-ly* *adv.*

spec-tro-scop'ic analysis *n.* The analysis of a spectrum to determine characteristics of its source, as the analysis of the optical spectrum of an incandescent body to determine its composition or motion.

spec-tros-co-py (*spék'-trós'-kó-pé*) *n.* The study of spectra, esp. the experimental observation of optical spectra. —*spec-tros-co-pist* *n.*

spec-trum (*spék'-trum*) *n. pl. -tra (-trə) or -trums*. 1. *Physics*.

The distribution of a characteristic of a physical system or phenomenon, esp.: a. The distribution of energy emitted by a radiant source, as by an incandescent body, arranged in order of wavelengths. b. The distribution of atomic or subatomic particles in a system, as in a magnetically resolved molecular beam, arranged in order of masses. c. A graphic or photographic representation of such a distribution. 2. a. A range of values of a quantity or set of related quantities. b. A broad sequence or range of related qualities, ideas, or activities: *the whole spectrum of 20th-century thought*. [Lat. *appearance* < *specere*, to look at.]

spec-u-la-rium (*spék'-yú-lé'-shón*) *n.* 1. a. The act of speculating. b. Contemplation of a profound nature. c. A conclusion, opinion, or theory reached by speculating.

2. a. Engagement in risky business transactions on the chance of quick or considerable profit. b. An instance of speculating. —*spec-u-la-tive* (*spék'-yú-lá-tiv*) *adj.* 1. Of, characterized by, or based upon contemplative speculation. 2. a. Given to speculation or conjecture. b. Spent in speculation. 3. a. Engaging in, given to, or involving financial speculation. b. Characteristic of speculation in the involvement of chance: risky. —*spec-u-la-tive-ly* *adv.* —*spec-u-la-tive-ness* *n.*

spec-u-la-tor (*spék'-yú-lá-tör*) *n.* One that speculates.

spec-u-lum (*spék'-yú-lüm*) *n., pl. -la (-lə) or -lums*. 1. A mirror or polished metal plate used as a reflector in optical instruments. 2. An instrument for dilating the opening of a body cavity for medical examination. 3. *Biol.* a. A bright, often iridescent patch of color on the wings of certain birds, esp. ducks. b. A transparent spot in the wings of some butterflies or moths. [Lat. *mirror* < *specere*, to look at.]

spec (*spéd*) *v.* A past tense and past participle of *speed*.

speech (*spéch*) *n.* 1. a. The faculty or act of speaking. b. The faculty or act of expressing or describing thoughts, feelings, or perceptions by the articulation of words.

2. Something that is spoken; utterance. 3. Vocal communication; conversation. 4. a. A talk or public address. b. A printed copy of an address. 5. A person's habitual manner or style of speaking. 6. The language or dialect of a nation or region. 7. The sounding of a musical instrument. 8. The study of oral communication, speech sounds, and vocal physiology. 9. *Archaic*. Rumor. [ME *speche* < OE *spéðc*, *spéðc*.]

speech community *n.* All speakers of a particular language or dialect, whether located in one area or scattered.

speech-i-fy (*spéch'-i-fí*) *intr.v.* -*fi-ed*, -*fy-ing*, -*fi-es*. To give a speech. —*speech-i-fíer* *n.*

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The
**American Heritage
Dictionary**

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immuter special. 2. A featured attraction that features a specific wunder performer. [ME < OFr. *especial*, kind. —see SPECIES.] —spec'cial, adj.

nd specially have wider applicability. In the sense that it shares with *special* is now much more common, as is *specially* rare and is used chiefly for outstanding quality: *work of superb especially*. On the other hand it is placed by *especially*. *Especially* is used for a particular purpose: *specially trained especially* is used in the sense of “particularly”: *He's especially talented. His Prudence is the best policy, especially*.

ive act that applies only to a particular

1. n., pl. **special courts-martial** of at least three officers for trying

e delivery of a piece of mail, for a special messenger rather than 1

sual or sound effects added to a television show during processing division of the U.S. Army commanded in guerrilla fighting.

he handling of fourth-class or pass mail for an extra charge. *iz'əm* n. 1. Confinement or limit of study or occupation. 2. A field

) n. 1. a. A person who has devoted branch of study or research. b. Practice in a specified field. 2. Any in the U.S. Army that correspond to sergeant first class. —spec'cialis

ti-te) n., pl. -ties. 1. A distinguishing quality. Special points of consideration. *chiefly Brit.* A specialty. *h'ə-lī-zā'shən* n. The act of specifying.

becoming specialized. *-īz'əd* v. -ized, -iz-ing, -izes. —intr. 1. In a special study or activity. 2. *become adapted to a specific environment* or concentrate on a particular activity. *specializes in mountain-climbing* (giving mention of; particularize. 2. *adapt or function to.* 3. *Biol.* To adapt to specify the payee in endorsing

chosen by the court upon request by better-qualified candidates for complex issues of fact.

Law. The assertion of new or specious party's allegations, as an alternative. 2. A presentation of an argument favorable or a single aspect of the

physical theory of space and time that is based on the postulates are equally valid in all nonaccelerating and that light is propagated in a constant speed and that the relativistic mass increase of rapidly moving objects, time dilatation, mass-energy equivalence.

extraordinary session of a court of relativity n. Special relativity.

n., pl. -ties. 1. A special pursuit, or skill. 2. An aspect of medicine in their practice. 3. A special feature. 4. The state or quality of being at contract or agreement, esp. a dead

ā'shən, -sē) n. The evolutionary species are formed. [SPECIES]

1. Coined money; coin. —*Idiom.* *in Law.* In kind; in the same kind or (in) kind < ablative of species. —see

) n., pl. **species**. 1. *Biol.* a. A fundamental classification, ranking after a organisms capable of interbreeding to such a category, represented in by a Latin adjective or epithet for. 2. *Logic.* A class of individuals due to their common attributes and me; a division subordinate to a genus or type. 4. *Obs.* An outward form or

appearance. 5. *Rom. Cath. Ch.* a. The outward appearance or form of the Eucharistic elements that is retained after their consecration. b. Either of the consecrated elements of the Eucharist. 6. *Obs. Specie.* [Lat. *species*, appearance, kind < *specere*, to look at.]

specifiable (spēs'ə-fī'ə-bəl) adj. Capable of being specified.

specif'ic (spēs'īf'ik) adj. 1. Explicitly set forth; definite.

2. Pertaining to, characterizing, or distinguishing a species.

3. Special, distinctive, or unique, as a quality or attribute.

4. Intended for, applying to, or acting upon a particular thing.

5. Denoting a disease produced by particular microorganism or condition. 6. a. Denoting a customs charge levied upon merchandise by unit or weight rather than according to value. b. Denoting a commodity rate applicable to the transportation of a single commodity between named points. —n. 1. Something specific, as a quality, statement, or attribute. 2. A remedy intended for a particular ailment or disorder. [Med. Lat. *specificus* < Lat. *species*, kind, species.] —spec'i-fic'ly adv. —spec'i-fic'ity (spēs'ə-fīs'ī-tē) n.

specification (spēs'ə-fī-kā'shən) n. 1. An act of specifying. 2. a. specifications. A detailed and exact statement of particulars, esp. a statement prescribing materials, dimensions, and workmanship for something to be built, installed, or manufactured. b. A single item or article that has been specified. 3. An exact written description of an invention by an applicant for a patent.

specific gravity n. The ratio of the mass of a solid or liquid to the mass of an equal volume of distilled water at 4°C or of a gas to an equal volume of air or hydrogen under prescribed conditions of temperature and pressure.

specific heat n. 1. The ratio of the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a unit mass of a substance by one unit of temperature to the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a similar mass of a reference material, usually water, by the same amount. 2. The amount of heat, measured in calories, required to raise the temperature of one gram of a substance by one centigrade degree.

specific impulse n. A performance measure for rocket propellants that is equal to units of thrust per unit weight of propellant consumed per unit time.

specific performance n. *Law.* The performance of a legal contract as specified in its terms.

specific resistance n. *Elect.* Resistivity (sense 2).

specific thrust n. Specific impulse.

specify (spēs'ī-fī') tr.v. -fied, -fy-ing, -fies. 1. To state explicitly. 2. To include in a specification. [ME *specifien* < OFr. *specifier* < Med. Lat. *specificare* < *specificus*, specific.]

specimen (spēs'ə-mən) n. 1. An individual, item, or part taken as representative of an entire set or whole; sample.

2. A sample, as of tissue, blood, or urine, used for analysis and diagnosis. [Lat., example < *specere*, to look at.]

specious (spēs'ə-shəs) adj. 1. Deceptively attractive. 2. Having the ring of truth or plausibility but actually fallacious: a specious argument. [ME, attractive < Lat. *speciosus* < *species*, appearance < *specere*, to look at.] —specious'ly adv. —specious'ness n.

speck (spēk) n. 1. A small spot, mark, or discoloration. 2. A very small bit; particle. —tr.v. specked, specking, specks. To mark with specks. [ME *specke* < OE *specca*.]

speckle (spēk'əl) n. A speck or small spot, esp. a natural dot of color on skin, plumage, or foliage. —tr.v. -led, -ling, -les. To mark or cover with or as if with speckles. [ME *spakle*, perh. of MLG orig.]

speckled (spēk'əl'd) adj. 1. Dotted or covered with speckles, esp. flecked with small spots of contrasting color. 2. Of a mixed character; motley.

speckled trout n. The brook trout.

specs (spēks) pl.n. *Informal.* 1. Also *specks*. Eyeglasses: spectacles. 2. Specifications (sense 2.a.).

spectacle (spēk'ə-tə-kəl) n. 1. A public performance or display. 2. a. An object of interest. b. A regrettable public display, as of bad behavior: *made a spectacle of himself*. 3. a. Something seen or capable of being seen. b. The sight of something. 4. **spectacles**. a. Glasses (sense 4.b.). b. Something resembling eyeglasses in shape or suggesting them in function. [ME < OFr. < Lat. *spectaculum* < *specere*, to watch, freq. of *specere*, to look at.]

spectacled (spēk'ə-kəld) adj. 1. Wearing spectacles. 2. Having markings suggesting spectacles. Used of animals.

spectac'ular (spēk'ə-tə-lər) adj. Of the nature of a spectacle; sensational. —n. A single theatrical production of unusual length or lavishness. —spec'ac'ular'ly (-lər'-lī-tē) n. —spec'ac'ular'ly adv.

spectator (spēk'ə-tər) n. An observer of an event. [Lat. *spectator* < *specere*, to watch. —see *SPECTACLE*.]

specter (spēk'ər) n. 1. A phantom; apparition. 2. A threatening or haunting possibility: *the terrible specter of nuclear war*. [Fr. *spectre* < Lat. *spectrum*, appearance < *specere*, to look at.]

spectra (spēk'ra) n. A plural of *spectrum*.

spectral (spēk'ral) adj. 1. Of or resembling a specter; ghostly. 2. Of, pertaining to, or produced by a spectrum.

—spec'ral'ly (-rāl'-lī-tē), spec'ral'ness n. —spec'ral'ly adv.

spectral line n. An isolated peak of intensity in a spectrum,

esp. one of the visible dispersed images of the slit through which light enters the collimator of a spectroscope, produced by light of a single wavelength.

spectre (spēk'ər) n. *Chiefly Brit.* Variant of *specter*.

spectro- pref. Spectrum: *spectrograph*. [*< SPECTRUM*.]

spectro-gram (spēk'ro-gram') n. A graph or photograph of a spectrum.

spectro-graph (spēk'ro-grāf') n. 1. A spectroscope equipped to photograph spectra. 2. A spectrogram.

—spec'tro-graph'ic adj. —spec'tro-graph'i-cal'ly adv.

—spec'tro-graph'phy (-rōg'ra-fē) n.

spectro-heliogram (spēk'ro-hē'lē-ə-grām') n. A photograph of the sun taken in a narrow wavelength band centered on a selected wavelength.

spectro-heliograph (spēk'ro-hē'lō-grāf') n. An instrument used to make spectroheliograms. —spec'ro-hē'lō-

graph'ic adj. —spec'ro-hē'lō-og'rāphy (-ōg'ra-fē) n.

spectro-heli-o-scope (spēk'ro-hē'lō-skōp') n. An instrument used to observe solar radiation. —spec'ro-hē'lō-

scop'ic (-skōp'ik) adj.

spectro-meter (spēk'ro-mēt'ər) n. A spectroscope equipped with scales for measuring the positions of spectral lines. [SPECTRO(SCOPE) + -METER.] —spec'ro-met'ric (-rō-mēt'rik) adj. —spec'ro-met'ry n.

spectro-photometer (spēk'ro-fō-tōmēt'ər) n. *Physics.* An instrument used to determine the distribution of energy in a spectrum of luminous radiation. —spec'ro-phot'ō-

metric (-fō-tō-mēt'rik) adj. —spec'ro-phot'ōmētry n.

spectro-scope (spēk'ro-skōp') n. Any of various instruments for resolving and observing or recording spectra. —spec'ro-scop'ic (-skōp'ik) adj. —spec'ro-scop'ical'ly adv.

spectroscopic analysis n. The analysis of a spectrum to determine characteristics of its source, as the analysis of the optical spectrum of an incandescent body to determine its composition or motion.

spectro-scopy (spēk'ro-skōpē) n. The study of spectra, esp. the experimental observation of optical spectra. —spec'ro-scop'ic p'ist n.

spectrum (spēk'rum) n., pl. -tra (-trə) or -trums. 1. *Physics.* The distribution of a characteristic of a physical system or phenomenon, esp.: a. The distribution of energy emitted by a radiant source, as by an incandescent body, arranged in order of wavelengths. b. The distribution of atomic or subatomic particles in a system, as in a magnetically resolved molecular beam, arranged in order of masses. c. A graphic or photographic representation of such a distribution.

2. a. A range of values of a quantity or set of related quantities. b. A broad sequence or range of related qualities, ideas, or activities: *the whole spectrum of 20th-century thought*. [Lat., appearance < *specere*, to look at.]

spect'u-la (spēk'yo-lə) n. A plural of *spectrum*.

spect'ular (spēk'yo-lər) adj. Of, resembling, or produced by a mirror or speculum.

spect'ulate (spēk'yo-lāt') intr.v. -lat-ed, -lat-ing, -lates. 1. To meditate on a given subject; reflect. 2. To engage in the buying or selling of a commodity with an element of risk on the chance of profit. [Lat. *speculari*, *specular*, to observe < *specula*, watchtower < *specere*, to look at.]

spect'ulation (spēk'yo-lā'shən) n. 1. a. The act of speculating. b. Contemplation of a profound nature. c. A conclusion, opinion, or theory reached by speculating.

2. a. Engagement in risky business transactions on the chance of quick or considerable profit. b. An instance of speculating.

spect'ula-tive (spēk'yo-lā-tiv, -lā'-tiv) adj. 1. Of, characterized by, or based upon contemplative speculation. 2. a. Given to speculation or conjecture. b. Spent in speculation. 3. a. Engaging in, given to, or involving financial speculation. b. Characteristic of speculation in the involvement of chance: risky. —spec'ula-tive-ly adv. —spec'ula-tive-ness n.

spect'u-lator (spēk'yo-lā'tər) n. One that speculates.

spect'u-lum (spēk'yo-ləm) n., pl. -la (-lə) or -lums. 1. A mirror or polished metal plate used as a reflector in optical instruments.

2. An instrument for dilating the opening of a body cavity for medical examination. 3. *Biol.* a. A bright, often iridescent patch of color on the wings of certain birds, esp. ducks. b. A transparent spot in the wings of some butterflies or moths. [Lat., mirror < *specere*, to look at.]

speed (spēd) v. A past tense and past participle of *speed*.

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2. Something that is spoken; utterance. 3. Vocal communication; conversation. 4. a. A talk or public address. b. A printed copy of an address. 5. A person's habitual manner or style of speaking. 6. The language or dialect of a nation or region. 7. The sounding of a musical instrument. 8. The study of oral communication, speech sounds, and vocal physiology. 9. *Archaic.* Rumor. [ME *speche* < OE *spēc*, *spēcē*.]

speech community n. All speakers of a particular language or dialect, whether located in one area or scattered.

speechify (spēch'ī-fī') intr.v. -fied, -fy-ing, -fies. To give a speech. —speech'ī-fier n.